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'Viet Cong's Air Raid'

Hong Kong

North Vietnam yesterday released an account of what it described as one of the Viet Cong's most brazen exploits in the last days of the Vietnam war — the bombing of Saigon's Tan Son Nhut Airport with captured U.S.-built planes.

There had been conflicting reports about the bombing of the airport on April 28.

It coincided with the installation of President Duong Van (Big) Minh and

aroused suspicion in some quarters that "hawk" generals were warning him against capitulating to the Communists.

The North Vietnamese news agency said the attack was carried out by the fledgling Viet Cong Air Force.

The agency said that as government forces collapsed in the north and central highlands in March, the Viet Cong captured five U.S.-built A-37 fighter bombers.

The Viet Cong People's

Air Force, hurriedly trained its pilots to fly the planes and, in the dying days of the Vietnam war they launched themselves in formation at Tan Son Nhut, the news agency said.

When they arrived over the air base, the control tower appeared confused and asked the A-37s for identification, the report said.

Not until the Viet Cong planes unleashed their first load of bombs did the per-

sonnel at the tower realize the airport was under attack.

"Hell, it's the Viet Cong shelling, no, they are bombing," screamed one of the traffic controllers.

After the raid, the Viet Cong planes returned safely to their secret base in South Vietnam, the report said.

Surrender of the South Vietnamese government came just two days after the raid.

Reuters